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MORE PEOPLE BIKING  
MORE OFTEN

# Traffic Calming on Osborne and River

Executive Policy Committee  
April 16, 2024

## Addressing the Motion from Council

A big concern with the report is that it very narrowly addresses the motion from Council, seemingly taking as its main goal a repudiation of any interventions specified in the motion (i.e. removal of the slip lane, the pedestrian scramble, etc.) rather than as the starting point for exploration of interventions that would meet the intent of the motion; improving the comfort and safety of people on foot and on bike. As such, the report seems to place its focus on maintaining the status quo, and in doing so disregards the intent of the motion, as well as the intent of the Osborne Village Secondary plan, which it seems to ignore entirely.

We hope that Council can provide the administration with instructions to revisit this report with an eye to finding solutions that improve the safety and comfort of vulnerable road users rather than excuses to maintain the status quo.

## Ignoring the Local Area Plan

A major concern with the report is that it does not appear to have referenced the local area plan that should be guiding the decision-making process for the intersection of Osborne and River, the Osborne Village Secondary Plan. As stated on the City of Winnipeg's own website, "Local Area Plans set objectives and policies to guide the growth and development of specific areas or new neighbourhoods."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Long Range Planning, City of Winnipeg website, accessed April 8, 2024 - <https://legacy.winnipeg.ca/ppd/CityPlanning/LongRangePlanning/default.stm>

Development of local area plans involves a significant degree of public engagement. Area resident, businesses, and advocates as well as city staff invest a significant amount of time in the development of these plans, providing valuable direction on future development, respecting both the current context of the neighbourhood and setting a path toward a desired future environment that they hope will be guided into being through the policies included in the plan.

We should always be referencing our local area plans when we undertake studies such as the one before you now. I see no indication in this report that the Osborne Village Secondary Plan was referenced as part of this study.

This would not be the first traffic study in the area that ignores the local area plan. The Gertrude Avenue Traffic Calming Project also lacked any reference to the Osborne Village Secondary Plan, and as a result failed to make use of guidance provided in that document that would have allowed for interventions aimed at the main cause of the traffic issues on Gertrude: cut through traffic. Without the guidance of the Osborne Village Secondary Plan, interventions to deal with cut through traffic, though desired by the public, were deemed out of scope.

If we do not reference these plans in our traffic studies, we erode the public trust that we depend on to build up our local area plans, as well as our public engagement processes in general.

## Relevant Guidance in the Osborne Village Secondary Plan

The Osborne Village Secondary Plan provides clear guidance that pedestrian, bicycle, and transit use should be prioritized over traffic flow, and that this pedestrian orientation is critical to the economic vitality and livability of the neighbourhood. Had the secondary plan been referenced, we feel that more effort would have been given to find pedestrian-friendly interventions that would improve the walkability and bikeability of the neighbourhood. In absence of reference to the plan, it seems like the role of Osborne St as a traffic thoroughfare has been prioritized over its role as a commercial street and character element of the neighbourhood. Relevant guidance in the Osborne Village Secondary plan includes the following:

Osborne Street should be recognized as a character 'main street' area first, and a regional traffic thoroughfare second. A regional multi-modal transportation management approach to traffic mitigation is required to mitigate these conflicts.<sup>2</sup>

The intent of the Character Element is to provide a dynamic, pedestrian oriented environment that respects and reinforces the character of the area. It is to serve as the base for all other elements within the Osborne Village Neighbourhood Plan. The policies of the Character Element are to apply throughout Osborne Village, and other Elements of the plan are intended to build on these policies.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Osborne Village Secondary Plan, pg. 12

<sup>3</sup> Osborne Village Secondary Plan, pg. 15

#### 9.1.1 Common Transportation Policies:

9.1.1.B Ensure the safety and privacy of residential areas by supporting initiatives that discourage through traffic short-cutting via local streets and lanes;

9.1.1.C Encourage initiatives to reduce heavy traffic volumes and truck traffic on Osborne Street, when exploring city-wide transportation initiatives;

9.1.1.D Ensure future right-of-way improvements encourage multi-modal forms of transportation through a balance between efficient vehicular movement and safe, comfortable, and convenient pedestrian and bicycle circulation;

9.1.1.E Streets and associated improvements should respect and reinforce the urban character of the area in terms of street widths, boulevard design, and other criteria, and should emphasize the comfort and convenience of pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users;

9.1.1.F New development and capital works projects located on collector and local streets should give priority to pedestrians and cyclists rather than motor vehicles;

9.1.1.G Reduce potential vehicular conflicts by increasing pedestrian and cyclist safety through increased visibility and informal surveillance of pedestrian and bicycle routes;

9.1.1.H Improve multi-modal connections to the downtown when right-of way improvements are implemented;

#### 9.1.5 Streetscape Policies:

9.1.5.A Encourage streetscape improvements that include a system of pedestrian wayfinding within Character Commercial & Mixed-Use Employment areas;

9.1.5.B Support and encourage pedestrian activity along arterial and collector streets by providing street furniture and associated amenities;

9.1.5.C Designed streets so pedestrians have convenient and safe means to cross streets. Allowable treatments may include but are not limited to raised pedestrian crosswalks, multi-way stops, bulb-outs, alternative pavement treatments, and signals at crosswalks where warranted;<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Osborne Village Secondary Plan, City of Winnipeg, pg. 34-35

# Potential Positive Pedestrian-prioritized Interventions

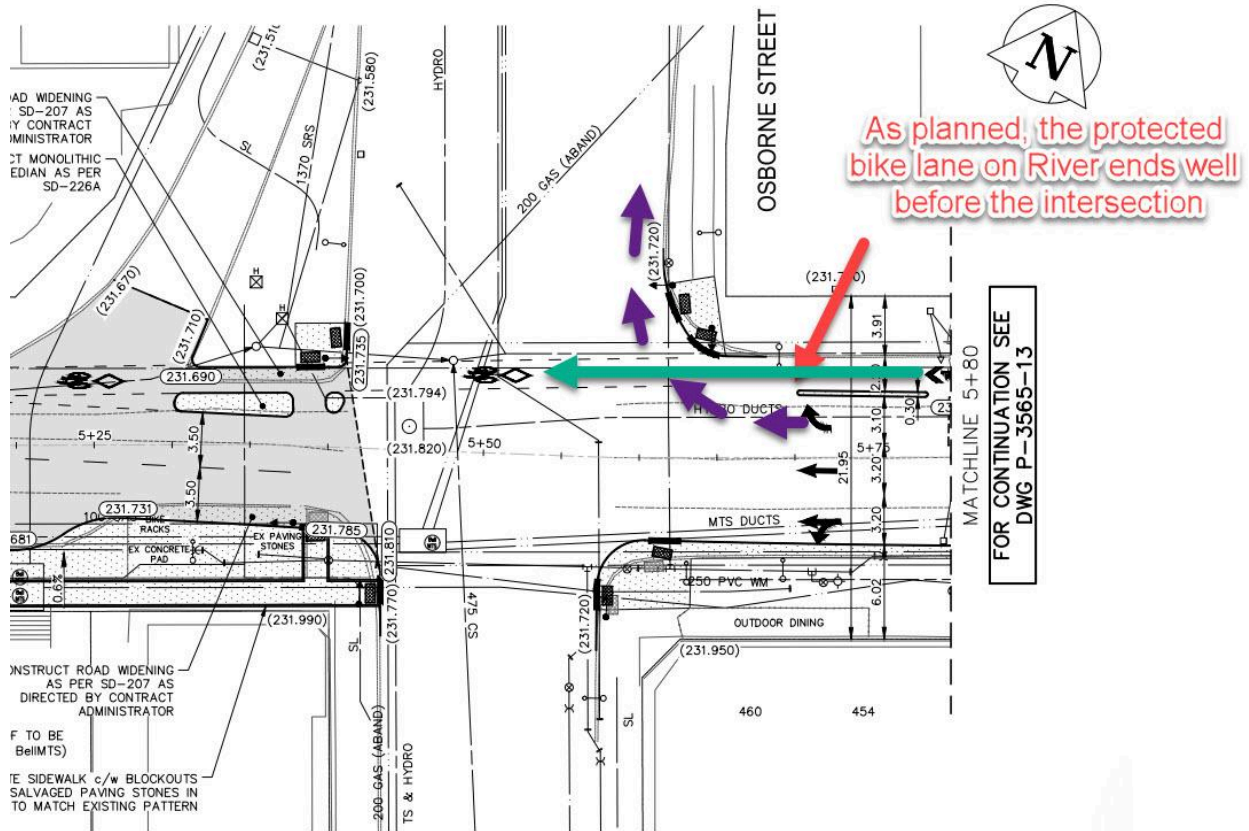
While the motion from Council only makes specific reference to the removal of the slip lane, continuous sidewalks, and a pedestrian scramble signal as interventions to improve pedestrian safety and convenience at the intersection of Osborne and River, it also clearly indicates an intent to have the Public Works department review a wider range of interventions that might improve pedestrian safety and convenience at the intersection of Osborne and River. It is therefore discouraging that the report seems to have limited itself to an investigation of these example interventions instead of following a broader based investigation of possible interventions that could be provided to meet the motion's intent and improve safety and convenience at this important intersection.

As noted above, the Osborne Village Secondary Plan provides very strong policy guidance that pedestrians should be prioritized. Rather than just providing arguments against the specific pedestrian-friendly interventions listed in the Council motion, we feel that the study has missed the opportunity to take a proactive look at other interventions with the potential to fulfill the prioritization of pedestrians and cyclists called for in both the motion and the Osborne Village Secondary plan.

## Protected Intersection

A first suggestion to improve safety and convenience of the intersection is to prioritize the safety of pedestrians and people on bikes by reducing the conflict posed by traffic turning right off of River Ave onto Osborne across the protected bike lane being constructed this spring/summer.

We feel that a protected intersection design should have been used here. The expectation is that there will be high volumes of bicycle traffic through this intersection, as well as high foot traffic along with a heavy right turn movement from vehicles (an unofficial number of 1,000 right turns per day was provided by transit staff in discussion of the intersection during the April 9th Public Works Committee meeting).



**Figure 1:** Design drawings from River-Stradbrook protected bike lanes tender, with conflict point between the protected bike lane and right turning vehicles highlighted.

We believe that a protected intersection could be provided in this corner of the intersection through the elimination of the right turn lane on River Ave approaching Osborne. This would:

- Allow the bus stop to remain at the corner of River and Osborne rather than be backed up to the start of the right turn lane.
- Reduce the risk of right hook collisions with people on bikes heading across Osborne St
- Reduce the crossing distance of River Ave
- Provide a second ramped entrance to the bus platform
- Square up the crossing of Osborne on the north side of River



Figure 5.3. Standard protected intersection showing pedestrian crossings with and without a refuge

#### Design Features

- (A) Bus stop island platform width 3.0 m
- (B) Direct connection from pedestrian refuge to bus stop island platform
- (C) Delineation pavers with width of 0.2 m (This delineation feature is currently under review, and may be replaced by a new standard in the near future)

The City's preference at signalized intersections is to locate bus stops on the far side of the intersection, but there are many exceptions that may require a near side bus stop including bus turning movements, key origins/destinations, and space/driveway conflicts on the far side of the intersection. Consult with Transit Services – Operational Planning for preferred bus stop locations

**Figure 2:** A protected intersection design in the northeast corner of the intersection of Osborne St and River Ave would increase safety for vulnerable road users and reduce conflicts between motorized vehicles.

Source: Source: Protected Intersection Design Guide, City of Ottawa, September 2021; pg. 35, accessed at <https://ottawa.ca/en/planning-development-and-construction/community-design/design-and-planning-guidelines/completed-guidelines/protected-intersection-design-guide#section-1dc2a98c-da8d-4533-86f7-d9dea3f12d8c>

A protected intersection design provides a buffer between the right turning vehicles and the protected bike lane. The reduced turning radius of the protected intersection encourages slower motorist turning speeds and creates sharper turning angles at the point of conflict. That is meant to increase yielding behaviour of motorists making the right turn across the bike lane and crosswalk.

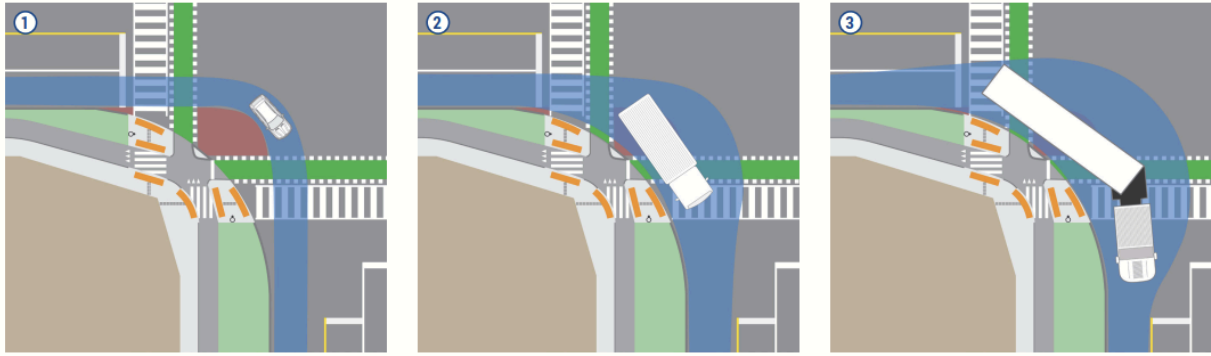


Figure 3.2. Standard protected corner with large radius and corner apron showing 1. Managed vehicle, 2. Design vehicle, and 3. Control vehicle turning paths

**Figure 3:** Designing protected intersections to accommodate managed, design, and control vehicles.

**Source:** Protected Intersection Design Guide, City of Ottawa, September 2021; pg. 14, accessed at <https://ottawa.ca/en/planning-development-and-construction/community-design/design-and-planning-guidelines/completed-guidelines/protected-intersection-design-guide#section-1dc2a98c-da8d-4533-86f7-d9dea3f12d8c>

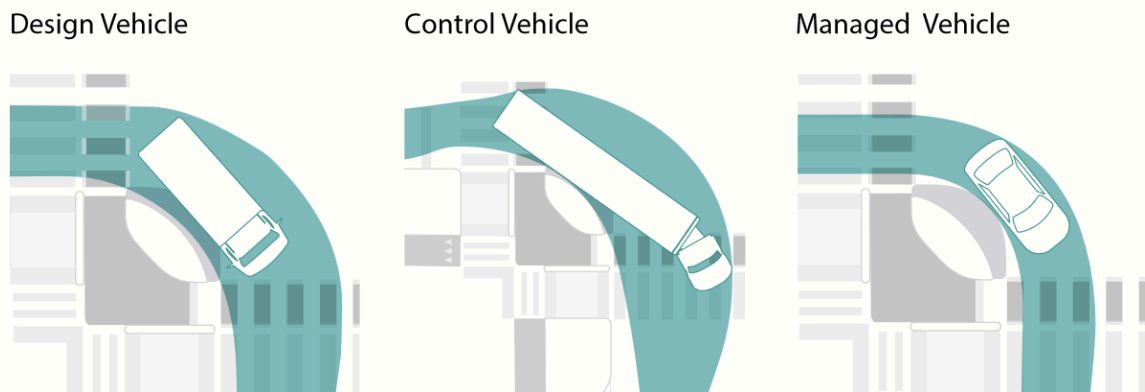


Figure 9: Types of vehicles accommodated at an intersection corner Source: NACTO

**Figure 4:** Using truck aprons to accommodate various design vehicles at a protected intersection with corner islands.

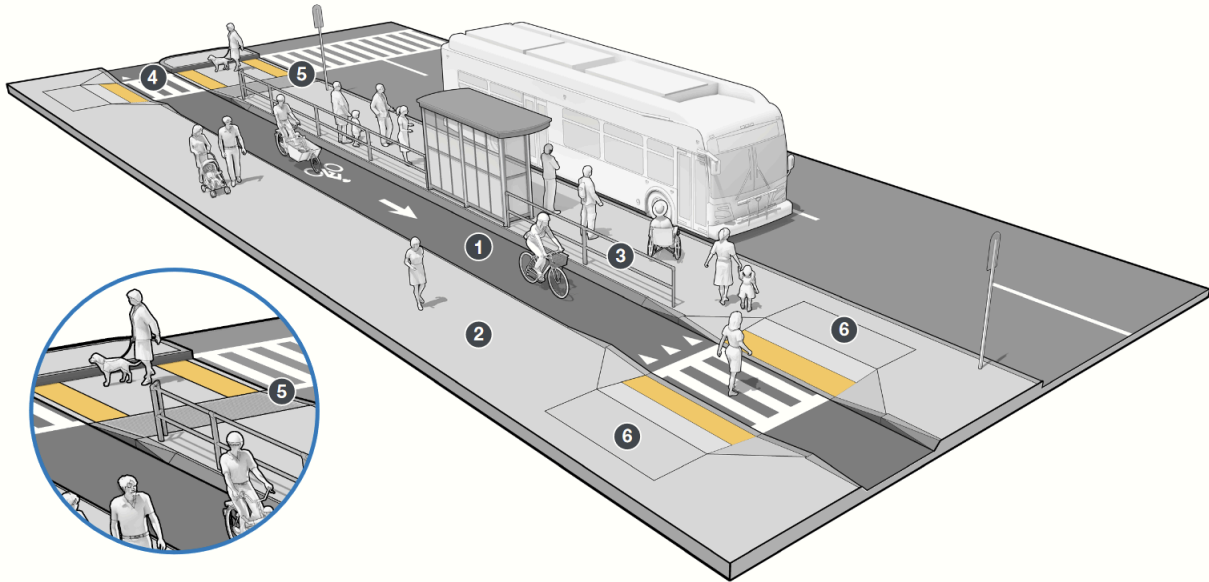
**Source:** Corner Design for All Users; Alta Planning + Design, 2020; pg. 16 accessed at: [https://altago.com/wp-content/uploads/Corner-Design-for-All-Users\\_Alta\\_Oct-2020.pdf](https://altago.com/wp-content/uploads/Corner-Design-for-All-Users_Alta_Oct-2020.pdf)

The MassDOT Separated Bike Lane Planning & Design Guide, a well-respected design guideline for protected bike lanes, provides excellent advice on the integration of protected bike lanes and bus stops.

We ask that a protected intersection be implemented as part of the River/Stradbrook protected bike lanes project to reduce the right turn conflict at the corner of River and Osborne St. Efforts to reach out to organizations serving people with visual impairment, as well as organizations serving people with mobility challenges should be included in the project.



## EXHIBIT 5J: FLOATING BUS STOP (INTERSECTION)



### FLOATING BUS STOP (INTERSECTION)

EXHIBIT 5J shows a street level separated bike lane alongside a far-side floating bus stop. Transit operators generally prefer far-side stops because conflicts with crossing pedestrians and turning motor vehicles are minimized.

This stop is located on a curb extension, also known as a bus bulb. Bus bulbs minimize the loss of on-street parking, simplify maneuvers for bus operators and provide more space for passenger amenities.

- Consider bus bulbs adjacent to separated bike lanes to preserve right-of-way for the separated bike lane and sidewalk. ① ②
- Consider railing or planters to channelize pedestrian access to and from busy bus stops. ③
- Integrate bus stop into the pedestrian crossing at the intersection for convenient access. ④
- Ramp to street level pedestrian cut-through must not exceed 8.3 percent. ⑤
- Provide level landing at curb ramps (4 ft. by 4 ft. minimum). ⑥

**Figure 5:** Integration of a protected bike lane with a bus stop. Note that this image showing a far-side bus stop is provided only as an example to show the interaction between people on bike and those on foot. The bus stop at River and Osborne would flip this design to accommodate a near side bus stop.

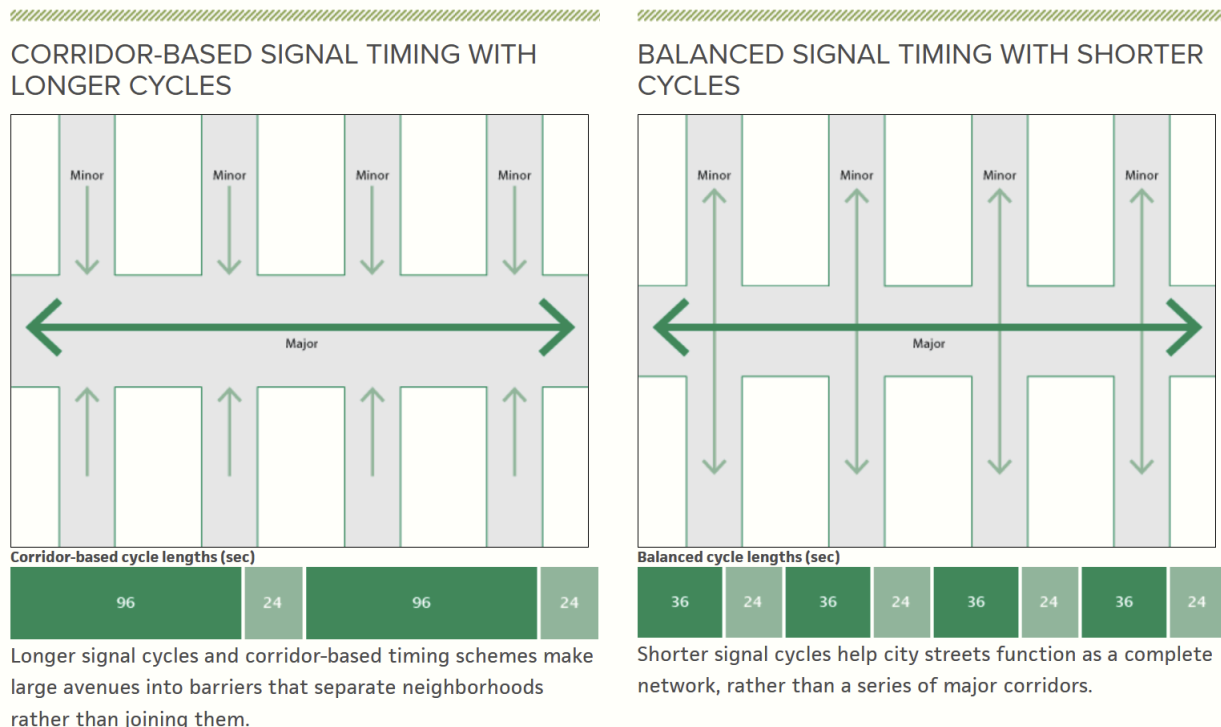
**Source:** Separated Bike Lane Planning & Design Guide, pg. 101, accessed at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/chapter-5-curb-side-activity-design/download>

## Reduced Cycle Length

While the study makes the case that a pedestrian scramble would not provide the hoped for benefit to pedestrians, it does not look into any other options to improve pedestrian safety, convenience, or comfort of pedestrians. A well-established best practice in this regard is to reduce cycle lengths to limit wait times. Ideally, signal cycle lengths should be minimized to promote consistent crossing opportunities and create a more permeable pedestrian environment suitable for the pedestrian nature of Osborne Village.



Short cycle lengths of 60–90 seconds are ideal for urban areas and permit frequent gaps and consistent crossing opportunities. The current 90 second signal cycle length identified in this report is at the maximum range considered ideal for an urban area. The report needs to review options to reduce the signal cycle length to 70 or 75 seconds. Doing so will likely increase pedestrian compliance while increasing the convenience and comfort of people accessing shops along Osborne St. These changes could be applied across the full length of Osborne St to extend this benefit through the Lord Rovers and South Osborne neighbourhoods where similar concerns have arisen.



**Figure 6:** Reducing the cycle lengths along the Osborne Corridor would reduce pedestrian wait times while providing consistent crossing opportunities and a more permeable walking network.

**Source:** Signal Cycle Lengths, NACTO Urban Street Design Guide; accessed at <https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide/intersection-design-elements/traffic-signals/signal-cycle-lengths/>

## Continuous Sidewalks

While the report recognizes continuous sidewalks as an intervention having a “positive outlook” to be reviewed as part of an upcoming update to the Transportation Standards Manual, it makes no recommendations to include even a pilot for such an intervention here, despite the direct call for such a pilot in the motion that triggered this study.

Cities such as Edmonton are making wide use of continuous sidewalks as part and parcel of their regular maintenance work. Guidance on Smart Channels, as provided in the City of

Ottawa's Protected Intersection Design Guide clearly calls for the inclusion of continuous sidewalks as part of Smart Channel design as well. Indeed, the Osborne Village Secondary plan also calls for the use of Raised Crossings.<sup>5</sup>

We ask that a pilot of a continuous sidewalk be implemented as part of the River/Stradbrook protected bike lanes project. Efforts to reach out to organizations serving people with visual impairment, as well as organizations serving people with mobility challenges should be included in the project.

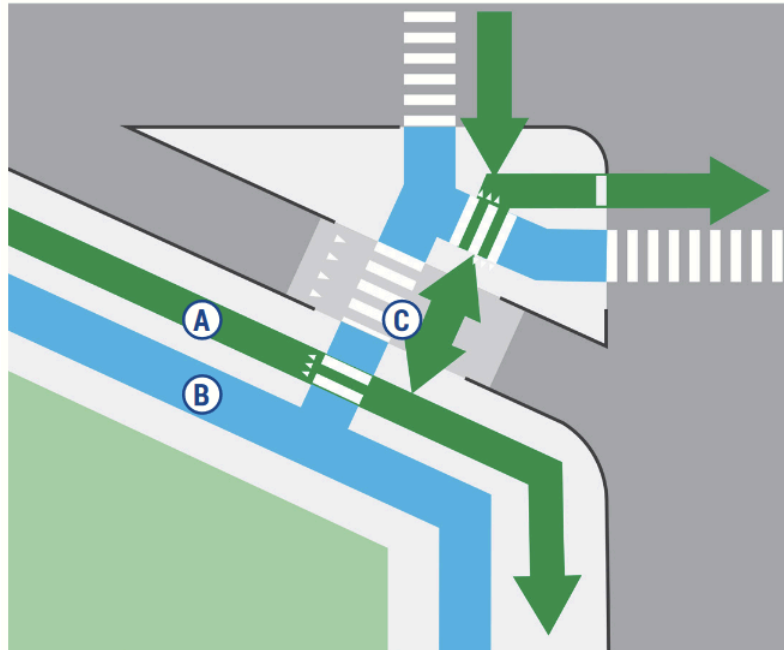


Figure 4.6. Smart channel protected corner

**Design Features**

- (A)** Cycling path
- (B)** Pedestrian path
- (C)** Raised crossing

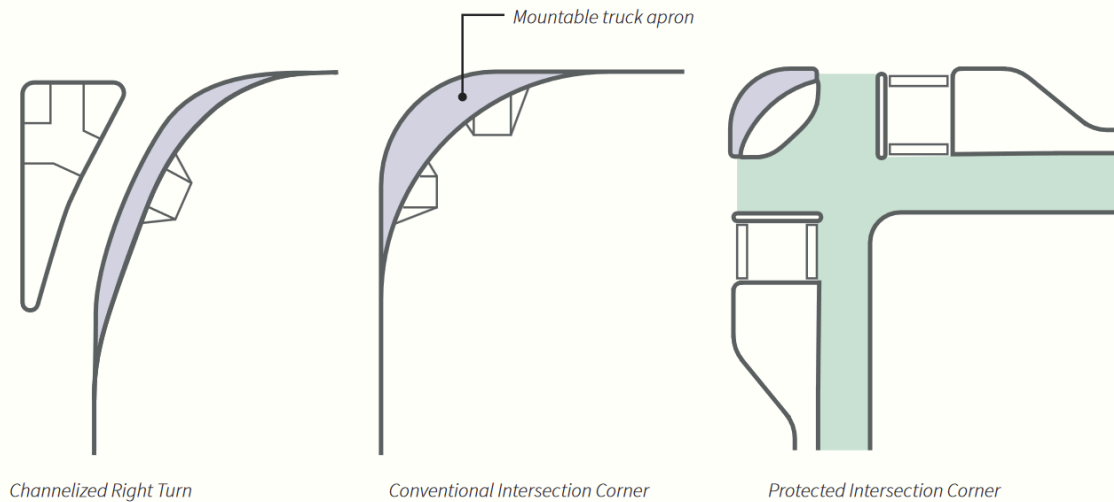
**Figure 7:** Adding a continuous sidewalk to promote speed reductions in a smart channel design. Note that the above example includes a bike lane along the smart channel (A) that would not be part of the design at River and Osborne.

**Source:** Protected Intersection Design Guide, City of Ottawa, accessed at <https://ottawa.ca/en/planning-development-and-construction/community-design/design-and-planning-guidelines/completed-guidelines/protected-intersection-design-guide#section-1dc2a98c-da8d-4533-86f7-d9dea3f12d8c>

<sup>5</sup> Osborne Village Secondary Plan, pg. 35, City of Winnipeg.

## Truck Aprons

Our final request is that truck aprons be considered instead of paint to tighten up the turning angle in the smart channel design of the right turn slip lane off of Osborne onto River Ave. Such a design is commonplace, and ensures increased compliance with the restricted turning radius of the smart channel.



**Figure 8:** Truck apron integration in various corner designs

**Source:** *Corner Design for All Users*; Alta Planning + Design, 2020; pg. 16 accessed at: [https://altago.com/wp-content/uploads/Corner-Design-for-All-Users\\_Alta\\_Oct-2020.pdf](https://altago.com/wp-content/uploads/Corner-Design-for-All-Users_Alta_Oct-2020.pdf)

As such a design would be new for Winnipeg, efforts to reach out to organizations serving people with visual impairment, as well as organizations serving people with mobility challenges should be included in the project.

Sincerely,

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